

Job Search

Step-by-Step Guide

1. Getting Started

A successful job search requires effort. That means getting organized, scheduling time for tasks and keeping a record of your achievements. First, invest in a binder and notebook to organize your job search activities. Use them to:

- Set weekly activity goals.
- Record names and dates of companies that you contacted.
- Log names, dates and addresses of past employers.
- Include copies of your resume.
- Include copies of certificates and other records related to your education, training or past employment.
- List names, addresses and phone numbers of your references.
- Write a statement that describes what you want to do. (It's called a "goal statement.")

- Identify and list three problems and ways to solve them.

- Take tests to learn more about your personality, interest and skills at:

- Keirsey.com (www.keirsey.com)
- ISEEK (www.iseek.org)
- O*NET OnLine (www.onetonline.org)

- Identify your personality type.

- List your interests.

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- List your skills.

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- Learn which of your skills are used in other occupations at:

- O*NET OnLine using “Crosswalks”
www.onetonline.org
- PositivelyMinnesota.com using the Job Skills Assessment Transfer Tool
www.positivelyminnesota.com/apps/lmi/ota/OccupationSelectA.aspx
- Check if your skills are used in occupations that you are interested in and list results.

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2. Branding – Showing Your Best Self

Using the list of skills you now have, you can use them to make your self-brand. Self-branding, the way people find and tell their unique skills to others, lets employers know who you are.

- Create your self-brand:
 - Review skills you listed earlier in **Step 1: Getting Started**.
 - Pick which skills help define who you are.
 - Find out what information about you is posted online. Type your name into Google or another search engine to discover what information can be found about you. If you have a criminal record, prepare an explanation. (See **Section 6. Landing the Job**).
- Show your self-brand in your job search tools and resources: email, voicemail, portfolio, resume and profile on social websites.

3. Job Search Tools

With knowledge of your self-brand, you can create better tools for job-hunting. Here are tips for creating and using job search tools:

- Have an email account for your job search. Be sure your email address looks fitting for employers (not cute or offensive).
- Get ready for phone calls from employers. Record your voicemail greeting to ensure it's clear, without background music.
- Organize a binder or online portfolio that shows your best work.
- Create a resume that can be sent online, printed and modified.
 - Use 12 point font.
 - Be prepared to change your resume to target each specific job you're applying for. Use keywords listed in the posting's job description.

- Have someone proofread your resume for errors, layout and organization.
- Post your resume on job boards such as Minnesotaworks.net, careerbuilder.com and indeed.com
- Open accounts, complete profiles, join groups and make connections with employers on social networking websites including Facebook and LinkedIn.

4. Researching

Gather information about employers, career fields you are thinking of entering, job search and ways to interview.

- Discover what employers are seeking in a job candidate.
- Learn good job search practices, giving you a competitive edge and impressing employers.
- Visit career websites below to find careers or occupations that fit your personality, interests and skills.
 - ISEEK (www.iseek.org)
 - CareerOneStop (Careeronestop.com)
- Research employers for job openings and company information at:
 - Hoover's Inc. (Hoovers.com)
 - Vault.com
- Find short-term training programs to learn skills you lack or qualify for a better job.
- Use labor market Information to find:
 - Which jobs are growing or declining.
 - The pay range for jobs you are seeking.
 - Knowledge and skills necessary for jobs.
- Use the Job Skills Transfer Assessment tool to search for labor market information.
www.positivelyminnesota.com/apps/lmi/ota/OccupationSelectA.aspx

5. Job Searching

Know where to look for work, how to expand your network and ways to develop job opportunities.

- Create your account and profile on social networking websites. It's important since more than 50 percent of employers recruit with them. (You should already have an account on LinkedIn and Facebook. See **Step 2. Self-branding.**)
- Form a network by connecting with former coworkers, friends and membership groups.
- Join professional groups or job clubs.

- Talk to neighbors, friends and family members or visit businesses (or their websites) to find job openings that aren't posted. Up to 80 percent of employers have job openings in the hidden job market.
- Post your resume on job boards if you didn't do it earlier. Learn about job openings, internships, voluntary positions, and set up targeted searches. Job boards include:
 - Minnesotaworks.net
 - Usajobs.com
 - Indeed.com
 - Simplyhired.com
 - Careerbuilder.com

6. Stepping Stones

Look at other opportunities that can lead to the job you want.

- Gain experience and references, build skills and a solid work history, and get into a company or nonprofit agency through internships, temporary assignments or volunteer work.
- Earn income by landing a temporary job or paid internship.

7. Landing the job

Take plenty of time to get ready for your interview and be at your best to get that job offer.

- Avoid these mistakes before your interview:
 - Arrive unprepared. Failing to research the employer, understand the job opening, organize your portfolio or know how to explain gaps in your work history are examples.
 - Arrive late. Many job search experts recommend that you arrive 15 minutes early.
 - Wear clothing that's unsuitable.
 - Use too much make up, jewelry or perfume.
- Make plain to the employer that you know the company, understand the job and have the skills and attitude that match the position.
 - Know what the company produces and services it offers. Remember its annual revenue and the number of locations it has.
 - Ask questions: What are the qualities of your top performers? What are the expectations of the job in the first 30 to 90 days? What drives the company?
 - Show confidence, make eye contact.
 - Don't speak negatively about a former employer.
 - Have a copy of your resume and list of references.

- Explain any past criminal offense if the employer brings it up. Say that you have served your time, learned from that experience, and moved in a positive direction.
- Send a personal thank you note afterward. Explain how you can help the employer if you're hired and repeat your interest in the position.